

Five Ways to Be on Mission at Work

Presented by Lisa Bishop

Air Dates: Sept. 16-20, 2024

Day One

Does your faith make a difference in your job? Have you ever considered God has purposefully positioned you to proclaim the gospel at your workplace? Now before you picture yourself standing on your desk with a bullhorn or sitting on a Zoom call shouting scripture, don't worry, that's not what I mean. You aren't necessarily called to get out your megaphone and shout the gospel like a street preacher, but you are called to proclaim the gospel with your life. What does that look like? We will examine five ways to live our faith at work and to be on mission at our workplace.

We tend to think of pastors, church staff, or men and women who get sent to foreign countries as missionaries. But have you ever considered your workplace as the place God has placed you to be on mission? Well, the truth is, God has placed you at your job for a purpose, and whether he has you there for 12 months or 10 years, how will you live with a heavenly perspective?

As a follower of Jesus, everything we do is for the glory of God, and when we live on mission, we live on purpose for the purposes of God.

One way to live on mission in the workplace is by checking our attitudes and minding our disposition. What is your mood at work? How would your coworkers describe your temperament? Are you easily angered, argumentative, impatient, or dismissive of people who disagree with you? Divisive with your words or demeaning with your tone? Or are you approachable, personable, and peaceable? Do you give other people credit instead of keeping it for yourself?

Your behavior with your coworkers will be the litmus test to your credibility as a follower of Jesus. I was having lunch with a woman the other day and asked her how she was doing. She proceeded to tell me how she'd fallen into some poor behavior habits at work. Displaying impatience, irritation, and getting sucked into gossip circles; at times, she was the instigator of dragging down people's character with her words. She knows she is not putting God on display when she behaves that way. If you take an honest inventory of your personality at work, do you point to Jesus? I am not saying we will perfectly represent God; we are human after all. But do we purpose our interactions at work to point to him?

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law (Galatians 5:22-23).

When the power of the Holy Spirit is evident in our lives, we are a credible witness to our coworkers. We live on mission and proclaim the gospel with our lives when we behave in a way that produces good fruit.

Day Two

Do you see yourself as one sent by God in your job? Many Christians don't. We tend to see our jobs as a means to an end. A way to financially provide for ourselves and our families or to gain significance. But God has placed you where you are with a purpose. And while he gave you gifts and talents to apply to your work, our ultimate purpose as followers of Jesus is to point to him in our everyday lives.

One way we can do that in the workplace is to do our work with excellence.

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving (Colossians 3:23-24).

Whatever you do, and yes that includes what you do on the job. In the original language, the words “with all your heart” means “to carry out or perform an action with enthusiasm.” And when we aim to perform with energetic interest at work, we honor the Lord.

What is your mindset around your role at work? Are you working with all your heart or punching a timecard, doing just enough to get by?

Faith calls us to the highest standard in all aspects of our lives. Scripture challenges us to raise the bar in how we perform in our jobs, not just doing the bare minimum but going the extra mile. Are you known for your stellar work ethic? If you are a follower of Jesus, your work should surpass mediocre; you are to strive for excellence.

Doing your best work is not the same as perfection. I can speak from experience, perfectionism can lead to a host of issues, one being that others may not think they can live up to your impossible standards. That can leave people feeling discouraged. While perfection is not the goal, excellence is.

How we do our job matters because not only are unbelievers watching us at work to see if we will set a good example, but our heavenly Father sees too.

Are you giving your best efforts on the job, or do you need to step it up a notch or two? Working heartily at all you do is part of God’s mission for you.

Day Three

As we prepare to head into another workday, how can we reflect Christ in our daily jobs? Our work is not just for our bosses or for a paycheck. It’s an act of worship and service to God. Being on mission at work means reflecting Christ’s character in everything we do. This starts with integrity.

The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity (Proverbs 11:3).

As Christians, we are called to be honest, reliable, and ethical in all our dealings. This not only pleases God but also sets a powerful example for those around us. Sometimes it can be tempting to fudge numbers, distort facts, or spin the truth to make ourselves look better. But that is not walking in a manner worthy of the gospel.

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might..... (Colossians 1:9-11).

This call to action reminds us first and foremost to pray. Ask God to fill you and other believers with knowledge and wisdom from the Holy Spirit as you go about your workday so that we please God in every way, and bear fruit that lasts longer than short-term gain. Pray you are strengthened by the Holy

Spirit as you make decisions, and resist relying on your flesh. Praise your heavenly Father for his power at work in you; his Holy Spirit who guides you to walk in integrity.

Living with integrity means we live in harmony with our deepest held values and beliefs as believers, standing firm for our principles, especially in the face of opposition. We are more concerned with doing what is honorable in the sight of the Lord than what's pleasing to man. We do the righteous thing even when it's hard to do. Will there be consequences if we do not fall into the company line? Perhaps. And I am not saying it is easy. But in the long run, God will work everything out for your good.

We damage our witness when we don't walk the talk of our faith. When we live on mission, our daily lives match the message of the gospel and the character of Christ. We live our faith not merely profess it.

How can you walk with greater integrity this week? Ask the Lord to guide you and let the gospel shine through you.

Day Four

How are you serving your coworkers? We are looking at 5 ways to be on mission at work: checking our attitudes, working with excellence, and acting with integrity. Now, I want to examine another way to be on mission at your place of employment: tending to the needs of your coworkers.

Many of us spend a significant portion of our lives at work. It's easy to get caught up in our routine, focusing on tasks, deadlines, and career advancement. But as followers of Christ, we are called to a higher purpose.

Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your [willing and humble] slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:26-28).

These powerful words challenge us to rethink our approach to our daily work. Ironically these words are Jesus's response to two brothers vying for position, trying to snag the highest place of prestige and honor by sitting at the right hand of Jesus. It's a great lesson for us too. I'm not implying we should not have ambitions to rise through the ranks at work but how and why we do that matters.

If we are out for personal gain, people will see that, and Jesus knows our hearts. Posturing ourselves with pride puts a damper on our influence at work and the level of trust people will have in us. Are we out for our own best interest or do we desire to work for the best interest of others? Jesus had the highest position and yet he took on the attitude of humility, saw the needs of others, and served them.

Serving others in the workplace means looking beyond our own needs and ambitions. It's about seeing our colleagues as people God loves and has placed in our lives for a reason. Each day presents multiple opportunities for us to demonstrate Christ's love through simple acts of kindness: lending a listening ear to a coworker, giving of our time and offering to help someone with a difficult project, or even just sharing a word of appreciation and encouragement.

Who can you serve? Your genuine acts of service will model the heart of Jesus and just may open doors for deeper conversations about faith.

Day Five

Do you pray for your coworkers? Today we're wrapping up our week of being on mission in the workplace with a powerful way to make an impact at work: praying for our colleagues. When we pray

for our boss, the executive team, customers, and coworkers, we ask for the heart of God to move in profound ways; to bring his love, wisdom, peace, and provision into their lives. We pray people will come to have a saving faith in Jesus.

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people (1 Timothy 2:1).

This includes our coworkers, managers, and even those we might find challenging to get along with. Praying for our colleagues is a tangible expression of our love for them and our desire to see God's best in their lives.

Think about the people you see every day at work. Each one has their own struggles, hopes, and dreams. They may be facing personal challenges, health issues, or simply the stress of daily responsibilities. When we lift them up in prayer, we invite God to work in their situations and we are partnering with God in his mission to bless and transform lives.

Prayer can also change our own hearts and attitudes. It's hard to harbor resentment or indifference toward someone you are faithfully praying for. As we pray, God softens our hearts and fills us with his love and compassion. We begin to see our colleagues through the loving, merciful, compassionate eyes of Jesus, recognizing their inherent value and worth.

The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective (James 5:16).

This means our prayers can have a real impact. Whether it's a silent prayer at our desk, on a Teams call, or praying for people during your quiet time, God hears your prayers and responds.

We might not always see immediate results, but we can trust God is at work in ways we cannot see.

Praying for others can open doors for deeper conversations about faith. When someone shares a need or struggle with us, offering to pray for them, or even praying with them right then, can be a profound testimony of our faith and God's love. It shows we care deeply and believe in a God who is intimately involved in our lives.

When you head into work, remember you are on mission. Let's make it a habit to pray for those around us. Ask God to bless them, to guide them, and to reveal himself to them in powerful ways. Through our prayers, we become conduits of God's grace and love, bringing his light into our workplaces and fulfilling his mission.